



OPINION

Be Careful

The wet weather has kept farmers out of the fields and now the push is on to get planting and harvesting underway. This means the temptation to take dangerous short-cuts when you operate farm machinery will be ever present in day to day operations. But don't do that.

Deere & Company has just announced a campaign directed at owners of tractors who may be tempted to "bypass" start their tractors. Bypass starting is a general term for any start procedure other than the normal start procedure: for example, shorting across the starter solenoid with a metal object. Farmers sometimes do this by placing a screwdriver across the starter terminals.

The problem with bypassing normal start procedures is the potential of starting the tractor in gear. The operator may be injured or killed if the tractor abruptly moves.

Bob Avery, manager of product support at John Deere, explained that bypass starting places the operator on the ground in front of the drive wheel of the tractor. If it is in gear, the operator will likely be run over.

All farmers should heed the warning. We know that in the rush of field work it is easy to be in a hurry. But the chance of an accident is great enough without taking unnecessary chances. The little time you save with a risky practice in a moment of hurry could lengthen out to a long hospital visit that's just not worth the chance you take.

So, don't bypass start your tractor. And don't take any other unnecessary chances with farm machinery either. Truly, as the saying goes, the life you save may be your own. Or it could be the life of someone you love very much.

Be careful!

Farm Calendar



Saturday, June 24

Berks County Wool Pool, Reading Fair livestock building behind Fairgrounds Square Mall, Reading, 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Washington County Cattlemen's Classic, Washington County fairgrounds, Washington, heifer show at 9:00 a.m., steer show at 1:00 p.m.

Warwick Summer Festival, Warwick Park, Pottstown, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; raindate June 25.

Fayette County Farm-City Day, Jackson Dairy farm, Briar Hill, 5:00 p.m.

Lebanon County Dairy Princess Pageant, Annville High School, Annville, 7:00 p.m.

Ninth annual Hickory Ridge antique farm show, Horace Potter Residence, Milford, Del.; through June 25.

Fayette Co. Farm-City Day, Jackson Dairy Farm; noon to 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 24

National Holstein Convention, Minneapolis, Minn.; runs through June 29.

Hunterdon County 4-H Dairy Farm Open House, Delaware Township, N.J., noon to 5:00 p.m.; call 609/397-2971 for more information.

Maryland Beef Festival, Back

Acres Farm, Mt. Airy, Md., noon to 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 27

New England Arabian Horse Show, Eastern States Expo grounds, West Springfield, Ma.; runs through July 1.

National Holstein Convention, Minneapolis, MN

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FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

Dear Editor:

We, as Members of the House of Representatives and Legislators with veal producers, are concerned about an incident involving a Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture employee and the recent "Vigil Against Veal" in Lancaster. The "Vigil" was an animal rights demonstration against alleged inhumane practices of veal producers and ran simultaneously with the annual American Veal Association (AVA) Convention, held this year in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. One of the participants at a press conference called by "Farm Sanctuary," an animal rights group supporting the Vigil, was Roy Malik, a milk sanitarian at the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Malik's general comments

were critical of the veal industry's current practices and supportive of the position of animal rights proponents.

While Mr. Malik is guaranteed his right to express his opinion, we object to his use of his position as a Department employee to attack this vital segment of Pennsylvania agriculture. His appearance at the press conference was apparently unofficial, but the use of an official state vehicle to attend the press conference is an abuse of his departmental capacity and a possible violation of state law. We have contacted the Secretary of Agriculture for information on the department's handling of this matter.

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Clean

Pesticide Sprayers

The use of various kinds of spray materials in one sprayer is risky. This is especially true when you are using any type of weed killer. In too many cases the sprayer carries sufficient residual weed killer material to injure a susceptible crop. Farmers who are spraying corn fields with weed killers one day and then spraying alfalfa or tobacco plants the next day with the same equipment had better do a real thorough job of cleaning the sprayer.

Some materials can be cleaned by using warm water and soap detergent. However, materials such as 2,4-D had better be cleaned with one pint of household ammonia in 25 gallons of HOT water. Allow this mix to remain in the sprayer overnight and then spray it out through the system on the lane or driveway. Don't be guilty of harming good plants. One of the best practices with small sprayers is to have one for weed killers and another for other purposes.

To Combine At The Proper Speed

We are preparing to harvest barley and winter wheat in only a couple of weeks. Both of these crops require mechanical harvesting equipment and good weather. From the amount of volunteer grain I've seen growing after barley and wheat harvests, the last several years, it is evident that too much grain is being left in the field.

I am concerned that high combine speed might be part of the reason that grain is thrown out with the straw. The manufacturer recommendations should be followed in this respect. Also, there are times when the grain may be too tough to combine. This is often the case when the crop is quite weedy. The important thing is to have the combine adjusted to the best of your knowledge and then drive at recommended speeds. You'll need every bushel of grain and every bale of straw from your crop.

To Control Pasture Weeds

Pastures can be more productive if weed competition is reduced, and if rotational grazing is practiced, according to Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent. Rotational grazing also makes pasture management tasks easier to perform. When cattle have grazed one pasture, and are rotated into another, clip the grazed area. Besides keeping the vegetation more productive, it will also help to reduce weed competition. However, some weeds cannot be controlled solely by clipping. The use of herbicides may be necessary. A mixture of 2, 4-D and dicamba (Banvel) is effective in killing most pasture weeds, as well as

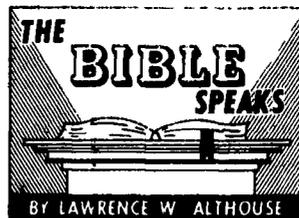
legumes. Repeated applications may be needed for some weeds. Be sure to comply with label instructions. Liming and fertilizing is also a good weed control practice; it helps the grass to become more competitive with the weeds.

To Consider Lightning Rods on Trees

How many times have you driven past a pasture field or exercise lot and noticed dozens of cattle or other livestock grouped together under one or two large trees? During severe thunderstorms, livestock will gather under these trees. If lightning strikes the tree, many of the animals will be killed. A number of farmers in the county can attest to that. For the protection of valuable livestock, we suggest that some of these individual trees be fitted with a lightning rod system. If there is a woodlot or a number of trees in the pasture, it may not be practical.

There is a Lightning Protection Institute at Harvard, IL 60033 that lists the Certified installers in your area. You can call them collect through their LPI Hotline 815-943-7211.

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CHOOSE IT OR LOSE IT!
June 25, 1989

Background Scripture: Joshua 24.

Devotional Reading: Galatians 5:13-25.

When I was a high school student, I had a classmate, George, who unnerved most of us by singling us out at the most unexpected times and demanding: "Are you committed to the Lord?" We all tried to avoid both him and his embarrassing questions, but one day he startled me from behind with that question we all dreaded. Trying to look as nonchalant as I could, I replied, "Of course -- I go to Park Church on Chestnut Street." Lowering his voice to a confidential level, he said, "That isn't what I asked you," and walked away.

It has taken me a long time to see in retrospect any redeeming purpose in that encounter. But, after all these years, it has finally occurred to me that George was right on several counts. The question of whether or not we have made a commitment to the Lord is one of the most important questions that can be posed to us. If we drift into church membership as I did, we may never really make a conscious choice, we are probably not really taking seriously what it means to follow him.

CONSCIOUS CHOICES

George was right when, after I had named my church affiliation, he said, "That isn't what I asked you." The question is not how faithful are we in attending the worship services or the church school sessions of a particular congregation, but how faithful are we in putting our lives into his hands? I went to church regularly, was active in the Youth Fellowship and sang in the choir, but I could do all of those things without really letting Christ live through me. It wasn't until later, while attending our church youth camp, that I realized that one does not "drift into discipleship," one makes a choice.

That is what Joshua said to the people of Israel: "Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness... And if you be unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve..." (24:14,15). Joshua was making certain that the people of Israel would be making a conscious choice to serve God. He didn't want anyone coasting or limping along between the Lord and other gods.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

The response of the people of Israel was very impressive: "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods... therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God" (24:16,18). But Joshua wasn't satisfied-- did they really understand what he was asking or were they talking off the top of their heads? Joshua goes on to tell them just how serious a matter it is for someone to make a commitment to serve the Lord: "If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm,

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